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THE DOCTRINE OF DESTINY

President Roosevelt went all the way to Memphis to join in welcoming General Luke E. Wright upon the latter's return from the Philippines. While there the executive took occasion to exploit anew the convenient theory of destiny which has been urged as an excuse for the permanent retention of the Philippines. He said, among other things: "Whether we are glad or sorry that events have forced us to go there is aside from the question. The point is that, as the inevitable result of the war with Spain, we found ourselves in the Philippines, and that we could not leave the islands without discredit."

The statement that "events have forced us" to exercise dominion over the Philippine islands is not true. The demand made by this government for the islands was not a forced one so far as we were concerned. It was purely voluntary, and the demand was made because of the supposed pecuniary advantage that the islands would be to us. Immediately after the victory of Manila the president began inquiring about the resources of the islands and influential exponents of the imperialistic doctrine have constantly paraded the financial advantage of "our new possessions."

The treaty with Spain should have provided for the independence of the Philippine islands as it provided for the independence of Cuba. The failure to make provision for independence was the first mistake on the part of the administration, but that mistake could have been cured by a declaration of the nation's purpose to give independence to the Filipinos. The ratification of the treaty did not compel us to hold the islands, and the senate, after the ratification of the treaty, came within one vote of passing a resolution promising independence. It required the vote of the republican vice president to defeat this resolution. Then the McEnery resolution was supported by nearly all the republicans who voted for the ratification of the treaty, and that resolution declared that the question of disposition was left to the future determination of congress.

Ever since that time the opponents of imperialism have been endeavoring to secure a declaration of purpose on the part of congress, but the republicans have refused to disclose their plans or to admit that they had any. Under the excuse that we were coerced by events, our government has proceeded to kill thousands of Filipinos and to dispose of their land. Because they have asserted the doctrine set forth in our own Declaration of Independence and refused to recognize a title based upon purchase or force, they have been called insurrectionists and have been put to the sword.

When Spain, under compulsion, ceded us the Philippine islands she gave us only a quit claim deed; she simply relinquished her claim upon them, but could no more convey title to them than the king of Spain could convey to an American citizen valid title to a Spanish subject. When the United States accepted title it accepted it in trust for the Filipinos, just as a man who takes a stolen horse away from a thief holds it as trustee for the real owner. If a man catches a horse thief in the act of leading away a horse from a neigh-

bor's barn and rescues the horse he cannot say to his neighbor that, finding the horse valuable, he feels forced by events to keep it. And yet if he did so his conduct would be no more absurd or indefensible than the conduct of the administration in trying to lay upon circumstances the responsibility for the establishment of a colonial policy. The president lays great stress upon strenuousness, and is credited with much physical courage. If he has the moral courage to announce and defend the principles which underlie imperialism let him cease to hide behind manufactured circumstances; let him boldly condemn the doctrine of government by the consent of the governed. Let him say: "We are bigger than the Filipinos and can whip them, therefore we are entitled to anything that they have." And when he has applied the doctrine of highway robbery to nations, let him draw the line between such a principle applied to governmental affairs and the same principle applied to individuals. When he attempts to distinguish between force as the foundation of national expansion and force as the foundation of individual acquisition he will begin to realize what imperialism really means.

The Crumpacker Resolution

The Courier-Journal warns the president against attempting to pass the Crumpacker bill which would lessen the suffrage of the south where the blacks have been excluded by suffrage qualifications. The president does not need the warning. He is wise enough to know that the Crumpacker bill is for campaign purposes only. It is necessary to keep up some show of interest in the colored vote in order to have something to point to at election time, but the republican leaders know that the passage of the Crumpacker bill, while reducing the democratic representation in the south would more than "set it by reducing the republican majorities in the north. It would be notice to the colored voter that his political status had been settled and he would feel under no more obligation to the republican party.

Without the negro vote in the north many districts and even states would be in doubt, and the republican leaders know this. The Crumpacker bill need not disturb southern democrats.

A Successful Leader.

On another page will be found a Chicago American editorial upon the literary and oratorical merit of some of the utterances of President Mitchell of the mine workers' association. The following paragraph quoted by the American is certainly an example of clearness, force and energy. Mr. Mitchell combines in an unusual degree the elements of a successful leader of men. He says:

"It was the united mine workers of America that conferred with the president of the United States in relation to the submission of the issues involved in the coal strike; it was the united mine workers of America that was requested by the president to end the strike; it was the united mine workers of America that declared the strike at an end; it was the united mine workers of America that sent the men back to work; and it is the united mine workers of America that is pledged to accept the award of this commission."

CLEVELAND ON DEMOCRACY

On another page will be found an article written by ex-President Grover Cleveland for the New York World, and editorially indorsed by that paper. It is reproduced entire that the readers of The Commoner may know the views and purposes of the reorganizers, as presented by the chief reorganizer.

In deciding what weight to give to Mr. Cleveland's opinion we cannot ignore the part which he has played in recent contests which have resulted in defeat.

He speaks of the "old-time success" of the party and yet he not only did all he could to defeat the party in 1896, but he had the mortification—from which he has never recovered—of seeing the ticket poll about a million more votes when he opposed it than it did when he was the candidate four years before with a united party behind him. The gold democratic ticket which he pretended to support in 1896—while he actually threw his influence to the republican ticket—only secured one hundred and thirty thousand votes in the entire country. If Mr. Cleveland and his followers demand positions of leadership, let them bring indorsements that bear democratic signatures. They are relying at present upon republican recommendations and the only recent successes to which they have contributed are the republican successes which they now promise to overturn on condition that the democratic party will become the servile tool of the financial interests that dominate the republican party.

But if Mr. Cleveland's record did not estop him entirely from offering advice to the democratic party it would show conclusively that he is insincere in putting forward tariff reform, imperialism and the trust question as the most important issues. In 1900 the democratic party declared for tariff reform, denounced imperialism and not only declared a private monopoly to be indefensible and intolerable, but pointed out a remedy for trusts. Did this platform—setting forth exactly what he pretends to desire—win the support of Mr. Cleveland? Not at all. Why? Because there is another question which to him is of paramount importance, namely, the money question. He now discourses ponderously about "aggressive expansion," but when the test came he preferred a gold standard empire to a bimetallic republic. He seems very solicitous about tariff reform and yet he preferred the high priest of protection on a Wall street financial platform to an advocate of tariff reform running on a platform to which the money power was opposed.

He professes to be alarmed at the growth of the trust evil, but he preferred to join with the financiers to protect the trusts rather than join with the democrats to destroy the trusts. True to the interests of financial backers he studiously avoids all reference to the currency question, not because he is ignorant of the schemes that the money trust has on foot, but because his part is to divert attention to other issues while they secure still further advantage. He entertains the family on the front porch while his financial confederates plunder the house from the rear.

If the reorganizers regain possession (a pos-